

same is true for the EPA's regulatory plan. Gas prices will go up, electricity will go up, farm input costs will go up, consumers will pay more, and U.S. manufacturing will get crushed under the heavy hand of the EPA. Meanwhile, our overseas competitors, unfettered by the cap, will gobble up market share and hurt those providing good-paying jobs in this country. Our farmers and ranchers will not be spared either. The cost of running pivot irrigation will go up. Nebraska has thousands of them. Diesel fuel for tractors and combines will go up. The price tag on fertilizer that farmers need to grow crops will skyrocket.

Some of my constituents might be saying: I am not a farmer, I am not a manufacturer, so I am not affected. Unfortunately, no American can escape the reach of this ill-advised regulatory effort. Because refineries are first targeted in EPA's regulatory schedule, because electrical plants are first targeted, electric bills and the cost of fuel will go up. If you think gas prices are high now, brace yourself—more price hikes are coming. And if you think your electric bill at the end of the month is already plenty high, look out for EPA's energy tax.

Believe it or not, the Obama administration has made it clear that these higher prices are exactly, precisely what the doctor ordered. During the Presidential campaign, President Obama famously said—he was really up-front:

Under my plan, electricity bills would necessarily skyrocket.

Citizens probably entered the voting booth with the false hope that we in Congress would never let that happen. Sadly, the Obama administration has made it clear that they intend to work around Congress. Energy Secretary Steven Chu even told the Wall Street Journal in September of 2008:

Somehow we have to figure out how to boost the price of gasoline to the levels of Europe.

That is not my vision for America. And with gasoline over \$7 per gallon in places such as Germany and France, I doubt many Americans share that vision. Yet this administration has chosen to use the EPA to make gasoline expensive through its ill-advised energy tax plan. The EPA is literally targeting our fuel refineries when gas prices are headed to \$4 per gallon and oil is over \$100 a barrel. It doesn't make sense.

But just when we thought we saw a ray of hope, when the President said he wanted to slow down the regulatory freight train bearing down on the Nation's job creators, well, something happened. He said he wanted to reduce the regulatory burdens on small businesses. He even went so far as to put out an Executive order in January, and he instructed the agencies to review "rules that have gotten out of balance, placing unreasonable burdens on business, burdens that have stifled innovation and have a chilling effect on growth and jobs."

Well, unfortunately, the EPA apparently believes their greenhouse gas regulations are more important than job creation. The headline from the Hill newspaper says it all: "EPA Confident Obama Reg Policy Won't Affect New Climate Rules." So the EPA, all powerful, quickly dismissed the Executive order saying: "EPA is confident that our recent and upcoming steps to address GHG emissions under the Clean Air Act comfortably pass muster under the sensible standards the President laid out."

In other words, the EPA believes, and continues to think, their regulatory cap-and-trade plan is not an unreasonable burden on consumers, small business, and job creators. One would have to suspend all rational thought to reach that conclusion. It is unbelievable. Here is the kicker: These EPA regulations will have no discernible impact on global temperatures.

Put simply, the EPA's agenda is all about more pain and no gain because the rules and regulations in the United States don't control places such as China, India, and Brazil, obviously. You see, global warming is called global warming for a reason. Yet it is our farmers, our ranchers, and our small businesses that will be saddled with the job-killing costs. American job creators will have one arm tied behind their back trying to compete. Even EPA Administrator Jackson admitted the House cap-and-trade bill would have negligible impact on global temperatures.

This is all unbelievably bad for America. It is no wonder the Senate roundly repudiated the idea last year. Yet the EPA charges forward. We must restore some measure of common sense. This bill is the right step, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Wyoming.

A SECOND OPINION

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I come to the floor, as I do every week, as a physician who has practiced medicine and taken care of families in Wyoming for a quarter of a century, to give a doctor's second opinion of the health care law.

County commissioners from around the State of Wyoming are coming to town today for their annual meeting. It was 1 year ago today, at their annual meeting, when NANCY PELOSI—then-Speaker of the House—addressed that group and said: We have to pass the bill so you can find out what is in it.

That quote has been repeated again and again and again, and people now know what is in this health care law. People have found out. Every month since this law has been passed, people have found out additional things about the health care law they absolutely do not like. Now that the American people know what is in the bill, and they know they don't like it, let's get to the

fundamentals of what the American people have asked for. When they asked for a change in health care in this country, they said they wanted the care they need from the doctor at a price they can afford. The new law fails that test, and it fails miserably.

It has only taken 1 year to break almost every promise the President made when he addressed the Congress and the country. So what I would like to do now is take a look, month by month, at how those promises were broken. I will start with March, since it is now March and this started with NANCY PELOSI's statement in March of 2010.

One year ago, the Congressional Budget Office evaluated the law to see how much it would actually cost. They told us the law could only reduce the deficit if it did something about the long-term insolvency of Medicare. Instead, the Democrats and the President proposed and adopted and signed into law cuts of over \$500 billion from Medicare. This was not to save Medicare but to start a whole new government entitlement program, a decision the CBO said would increase the deficit by \$260 billion.

Let's go to April. In April, we learned the costs for those Medicare cuts go way beyond dollars and cents. An analysis by the Department of Health and Human Services found these cuts could drive up to 15 percent of hospitals out of business. For this administration, the shortage of hospitals apparently takes a backseat to the shortage of Washington bureaucrats.

Let us go to May. In May, we learned over 200,000 Americans with preexisting conditions and expensive health insurance would not be eligible to enroll in the new high-risk pools created in the health care law; that is, of course, unless they were willing to completely drop the insurance they had and wait, without insurance—wait without insurance—for 6 months. Only then would they qualify for what was in the health care law. For many people with preexisting conditions, who were paying higher premiums, they felt that would be irresponsible behavior; that it would be risky, put them at financial risk. But that is what this administration and this government was proposing.

In June, after the administration sent over 4 million postcards to small businesses—you remember the postcards, the ones claiming those small businesses would be eligible for a tax credit—the Associated Press blew the whistle. It turned out the only small businesses that were fully eligible for these tax credits had to employ fewer than 25 people. So to be eligible at all, they had to have fewer than 25 people. Moreover, the Associated Press reported the tax credit drops off sharply if the company employs any more than 10 people or if the annual salary was averaging more than \$25,000. So if you had 10 employees and paid them, on average, \$25,000, you could get the tax credit. But once you went to that 11th employee and gave someone a raise,

you started to lose the attribute the administration said was so valuable.

That was in June. In July, the Obama administration's own Justice Department confirmed the individual mandate penalty is a tax increase. Well, when ABC News's George Stephanopoulos asked the President if the mandate penalty was a tax increase, the President said: "I absolutely reject that notion." Well, if the President absolutely rejects the notion, why is his own Justice Department contradicting him?

In August, without so much as a hearing before Congress, the President made a recess appointment. He tapped Dr. Donald Berwick to run the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. So how big is this Federal agency? Well, it includes oversight of a budget larger than the Pentagon's. Dr. Berwick believes the government must ration health care and that the only issue is whether we ration with our eyes wide open, as he said. Well, the President promised not to ration care, so why did he make an appointment of someone who believes it is inevitable to ration care and do it in a way without ever allowing the Senate—Republicans and Democrats alike, Members of this body—to even have a hearing so this individual could explain his position, explain his previous comments, explain what he has said and written? The President refused and did a recess appointment of someone who never testified, never came to a confirmation hearing, and he put him in charge of a program with a budget larger than the Pentagon's. Can you imagine if the Secretary of Defense was made as a recess appointment without a congressional hearing? It is unthinkable.

In September, the administration released new rules estimating that 80 percent of small businesses would be forced to change the coverage of insurance they offer to their employees. These aren't my numbers, these are the administration's own numbers. But it was the President who said, over and over, if you like the coverage you have today, then you can keep it. Now we know that was another one of the President's empty promises.

In October, responding to complaints from unions and corporations, the Obama administration began handing out waivers—waivers that excused individual groups from ObamaCare's expensive mandates. These waivers went mostly to those politically connected to this administration. Most American families still have to bear the law's expensive burdens. Clearly, for this administration, playing favorites is more important than achieving fairness. I think every American ought to be able to get a waiver from this health care law.

In November, a majority of the American people voiced their opposition to this law and handed an election response that resulted in a significant change in the composition of the House and the Senate because the American

people knew they did not want this health care law.

The American people were concerned—and they even wondered if this law was constitutional—and in December, a Federal judge in Virginia ruled it was unconstitutional to force Americans to buy a product. The Service Employees International Union, one of the biggest unions in the country, also admitted in December that fulfilling the requirements of ObamaCare would be financially impossible. This is the same law they said the country needed when they lobbied in favor of it.

In January of this year, the Medicare Actuary called the administration's claim the health care law would bring down costs "false more than true." Also, a Federal judge in Florida struck down the entire law as unconstitutional.

In February—last month—we learned the 2012 budget the IRS submitted to Congress specifically mentions the health care law 250 times. They mention it as a source of authority and funding for new powers. They called the health care law "the largest set of tax law changes in more than 20 years." To begin implementing these changes will require thousands of new Washington bureaucrats.

Well, that was through February, and here we are, on March 9. Did the American people find out anything new about the health care law in March? Absolutely. Last Friday night, the Secretary of Health and Human Services granted another 150 waivers—another 150 waivers. Now there are over 1,040 waivers covering 2.6 million individuals. These are people who don't want to live under the Obama health care law. They don't want it to apply to them. I think every American ought to have a right to that same waiver. Of those 2.6 million people who received waivers, 1.2 million are members of unions. So that is 46 percent of the waivers have been given to union members.

If you look at the Web site you must go to for that information, the Secretary has tried to disguise how they label these individuals, and so union plans are now called "multiemployer plans." Under this change in the name, at the Web site you go to learn about this, are the words "promoting transparency." So we have an administration that says one thing but does another.

But the American people now know what is in the law. As they were studying the law before the vote, they didn't want it. Now they know all about it, and they still don't want it. It is clear it is unsustainable, unaffordable, and unconstitutional. It is time to repeal and replace it.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Missouri.

THE BUDGET

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, I thank the Chair for allowing me the floor for a few minutes.

First, I wish to say, Dr. BARRASSO's second opinion is clearly the opinion of Missourians. I think when you ask Americans if they want to see changes in the health care system—but not these changes—they say: Yes, we want the health care system to be changed. We just don't want it changed this way.

I remind the Chair, in Missouri in the primary election in August last year, 72 percent of the people who voted said they did not want to be part of this health care plan. This is going to be a big discussion and a big issue for the next couple of years, until we decide what direction we are going to take.

Today I want to talk about spending. Two bills are coming to the floor today about spending and there will be lots of discussion about the cuts the House made, the \$61 billion of cuts and how this cut could have been better, how this is a good thing for the government or for somebody to do. Of course, I suspect most all of that will be true. What is unfortunate is that we on the Senate floor today do not get to talk about what we might cut instead of these things, these things that will be discussed that people think are such a good idea for us to cut.

The truth is, we have to make the decisions that get spending under control. This year we are going to spend about \$3.8 trillion and we are going to collect about \$2.2 trillion. Even though "trillion dollars" is too big a concept to wrap your mind around, everybody understands that 3.8 is a lot bigger than 2.2. If your business was spending \$3.8 million and bringing in \$2.2 million, you would understand your business was not going to be in business very much longer. If your family was spending \$38,000 and bringing in the door \$22,000, you would know that could not continue. This cannot continue either.

The idea we cannot make \$61 billion of reductions in spending in a \$3.8 trillion budget, \$1.6 trillion of which is deficit spending, doesn't make sense to me and it doesn't make sense to the American people. We are going to have to have a government that can make choices.

Right now we have government trying to do the same thing over and over at all three levels. Some of those things government is trying to do at the Federal, the State, and the local level ought to be left to families, where they could be left to families. Other things are the legitimate job of government. But everything is not the legitimate job of the Federal Government and almost nothing is the legitimate job of all levels of government. We would be much better off if we tried to go through this process: OK, is this a problem that only government can solve? If the answer is yes, then the next question is: Can't we solve that problem closer to where people live and